

BASIC ACADEMY WAIT TIME

2024



Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission

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Legislative Mandates

ESSB 5187 (2023) requires the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (WSCJTC) to submit an annual report on the average wait time for recruits commencing training in a basic academy.

- RCW 43.101.200 requires all law enforcement personnel, except volunteers and reserve officers, to commence training during the first **six** months of employment, unless otherwise waived or exempted.
 - WAC 139.05.200 specifies this as the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA) or the Basic Law Enforcement Equivalency Academy (BLEEA).
 - ESSB 5187 (2023) mandates that the WSCJTC may not run a Basic Law Enforcement Academy class of fewer than 30 recruits.

- RCW 43.101.200 requires all limited authority peace officers to commence training during the first **twelve** months of employment, unless otherwise waived or exempted.
 - WAC 139.05.200 specifies this as the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA) or the Basic Law Enforcement Equivalency Academy (BLEEA).

- RCW 43.101.220 requires all corrections personnel to commence training during the first **six** months of employment, unless otherwise waived or exempted.
 - WAC 139.10.210 specifies which basic corrections academy must be completed by job function.

Introduction

The WSCJTC Basic Training Division (BTD) started 52 basic training academies in 2024, providing training to 1,483 recruits. These 52 academies consisted of the following number of academy classes:

- 28 Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA)
- 6 Basic Law Enforcement Equivalency Academy (BLEEA)
- 10 Corrections Officers Academy (COA)
- 2 Corrections Officers Equivalency Academy (COEA)
- 3 Juvenile Corrections Officers Academy (JCOA)
- 2 Juvenile Services Academy (JSA)
- 1 Misdemeanant Probation Counselors Academy (MPCA)

Law enforcement and corrections agencies may register their recruit before or after they are employed with the agency; however, the recruit must be employed to begin training.

The WSCJTC tracks recruit wait times in the following manner:

Enrollment Wait Time: This is the time between when a recruit's registration is submitted and when their academy class begins. Academy class placement is determined based on the date/time their registration was submitted. Tracking this wait time allows the WSCJTC to monitor how long agencies must wait to get their recruits into an academy class after registering them.

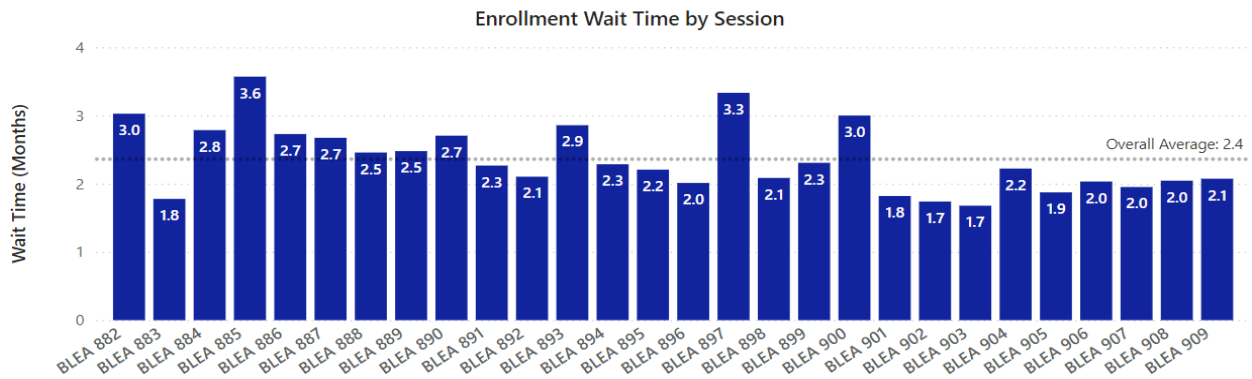
Employment Wait Time: This is the length of time between when a recruit is hired by their agency and when their academy class begins. Tracking this wait time allows the WSCJTC to monitor state-mandated timelines for recruits to begin required training from their time of hire. This annual report includes data for classes that began between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024.

Basic Law Enforcement Academy

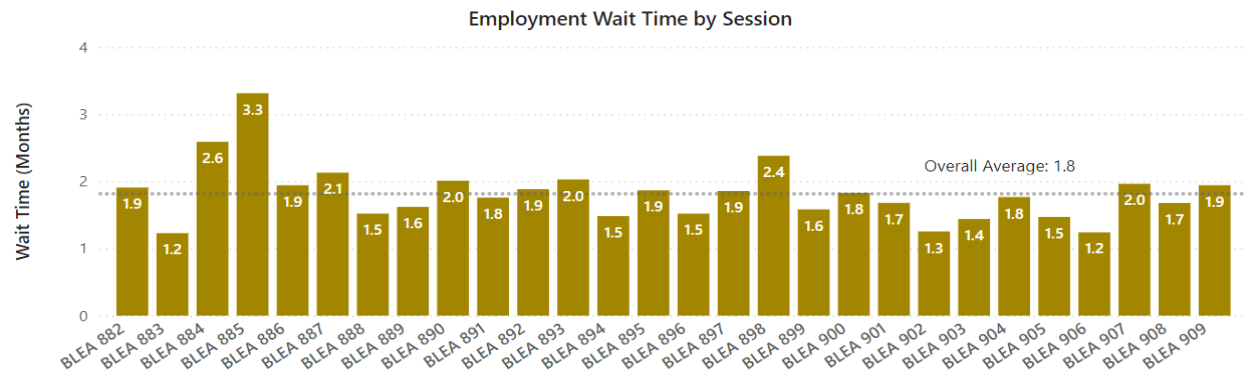
The Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA) is a 720-hour training program for peace officers to meet the training requirements of RCW 43.101.200.

28 BLEA classes began in 2024, training 810 recruits.

- Twenty classes were held at the WSCJTC headquarters in Burien
- Three classes were held at the Northeast Regional Campus in Spokane
- Three classes were held at the Southwest Regional Campus in Vancouver
- Two classes were held at the Southeast Regional Campus in Pasco



Enrollment times varied between 1.7 and 3.6 months, and recruits were, on average, registered for BLEA two months and 12 days before starting a class. This is one month less than the average for 2023.



Employment times varied between 1.2 and 3.3 months, and recruits, on average, waited just one month and 24 days after being hired to start a BLEA class. This is one month less than the average wait time in 2023.

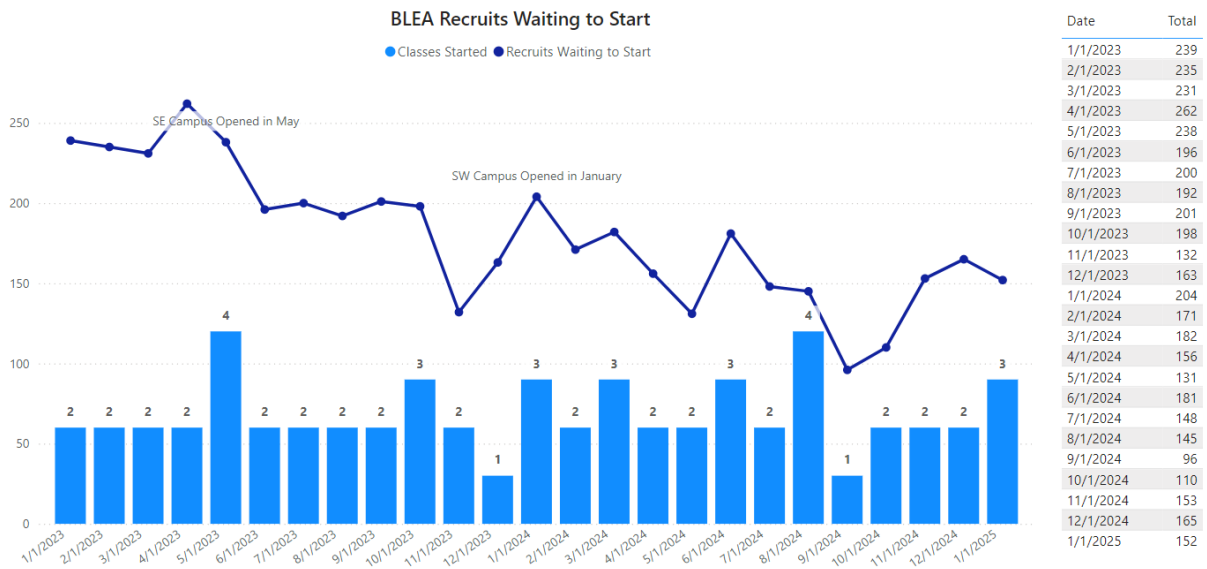
Synopsis

Although BTD received 16 additional BLEA registrations in 2024 compared to 2023, the wait time for BLEA recruits was reduced by one month by hosting two extra classes. The enrollment and employment wait times data shows that agencies registered their recruits around the same time they were hired. This timeframe meets legislative mandates for general and limited authority officers to start training after hiring.

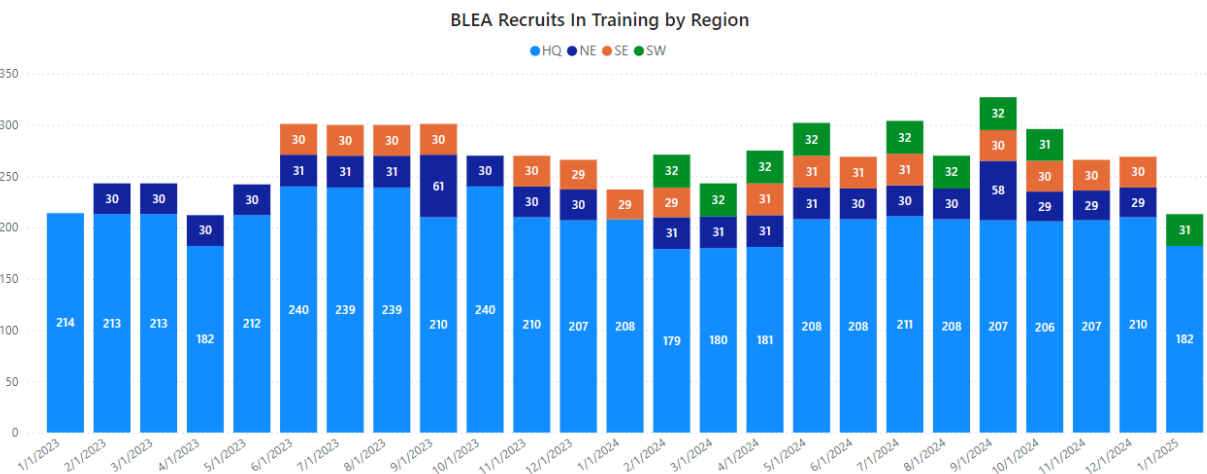
Regional Campus Impact to BLEA

The majority of classes take place at the WSCJTC headquarters in Burien, with at least two classes held annually at the Northeast Regional Campus in Spokane. The legislature granted BTD funding to begin expanding academy operations starting in 2023. The first class held at the Southeast Regional Campus in Pasco started on May 8, 2023, while the first class at the Southwest Regional Campus in Vancouver began on January 16, 2024.

Below is a chart depicting the number of recruits who were registered to attend BLEA but had not yet started a class as of the first date of each month since January 2023, also known as being on the “wait list”. This chart also displays the number of BLEA classes that began in the related month. For example, 239 recruits were registered for BLEA on January 1, 2023, and two BLEA classes started in January of 2023.



The chart below shows the number of BLEA recruits in training at WSCJTC campuses on the first day of each month.

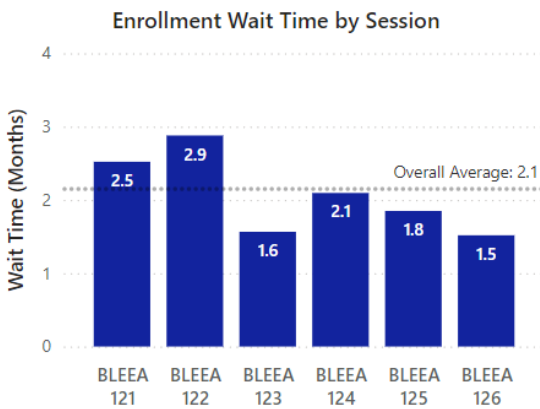


Basic Law Enforcement Equivalency Academy

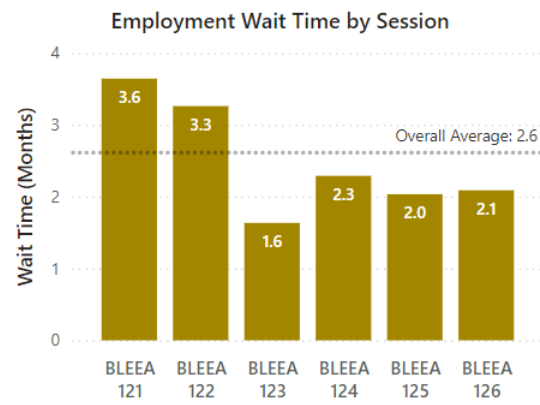
The Basic Law Enforcement Equivalency Academy (BLEEA) is an 80-hour training program for peace officers to meet the training requirements of RCW 43.101.200. These recruits are officers with previous law enforcement experience or training but are not certified by the state of Washington

Six BLEEA classes began in 2024, training 160 recruits.

- Five classes were held at the WSCJTC headquarters in Burien
- One class was held at the Southwest Regional Campus in Vancouver



Enrollment times varied between 1.5 and 2.9 months. Recruit officers were registered for BLEEA on average two months and three days before they started a class. This is one month less than the average wait time in 2023.



Employment times varied between 1.6 and 3.6 months. Recruit officers waited on average, two months and 18 days after they were hired to start a BLEEA class. This is three months less than the average wait time in 2023.

Synopsis

While Chiefs and Sheriffs can commission their recruit officers before they attend basic training, they are not certified as Washington State peace officers until they successfully complete BLEEA. Enrollment and employment wait times show that agencies registered their recruits around the same time they were hired.

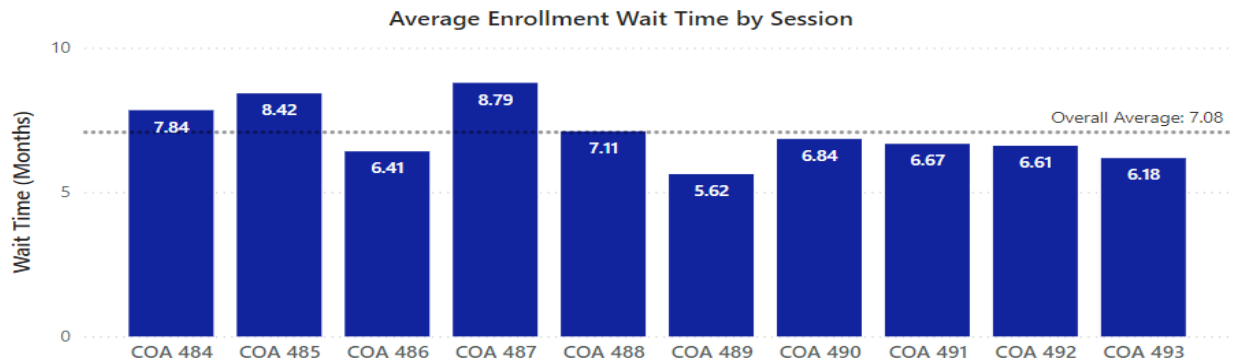
All Limited Authority officers required to complete supplemental training per WAC 139-05-200 attended BLEEA in 2024.

Corrections Officers Academy

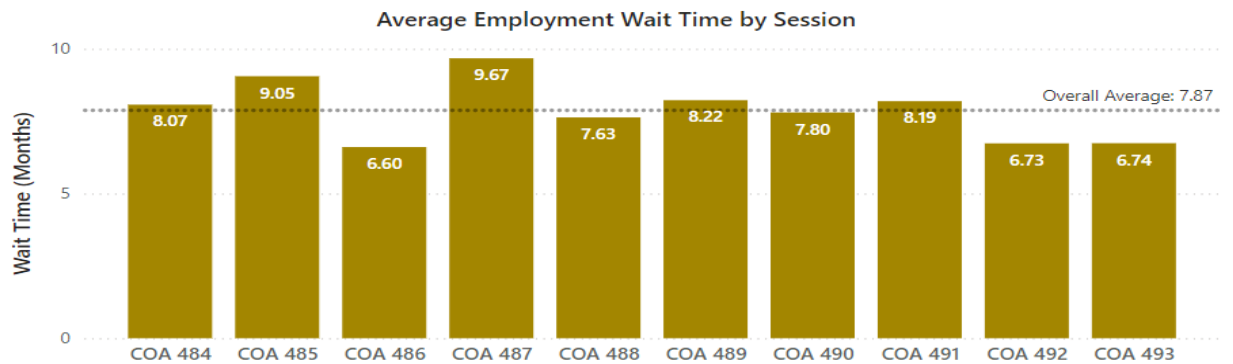
The Corrections Officers Academy (COA) is a 400-hour training program for corrections officers to meet the training requirements of RCW 43.101.220.

Ten COA classes were held in 2024, training 340 recruits.

- Four classes were held at the WSCJTC headquarters in Burien
- Four classes were held at the Southwest Regional Campus in Vancouver
- Two classes were held at the Northeast Regional Campus in Spokane



Enrollment times ranged from 5.62 to 8.79 months, with recruits typically registered for COA an average of seven months and two days before starting a class. This is one month longer than the average for 2023.



Employment times varied between 6.6 and 9.67 months, with recruits, on average, waiting seven months and 26 days after being hired to start a COA class. This wait time is nearly two months longer than the average wait time in 2023.

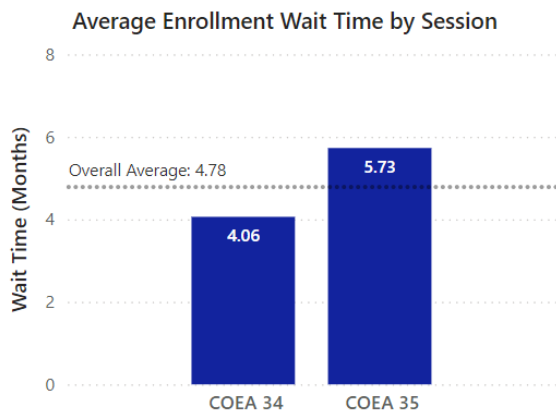
Synopsis

Despite the additional COA classes offered in 2024, corrections agencies impacted by staffing levels and budgetary constraints were often unwilling to send their recruits to the first available class, skewing the wait list data. Thanks to legislative funding, the WSCJTC was able to completely eliminate the COA wait list by the end of 2024.

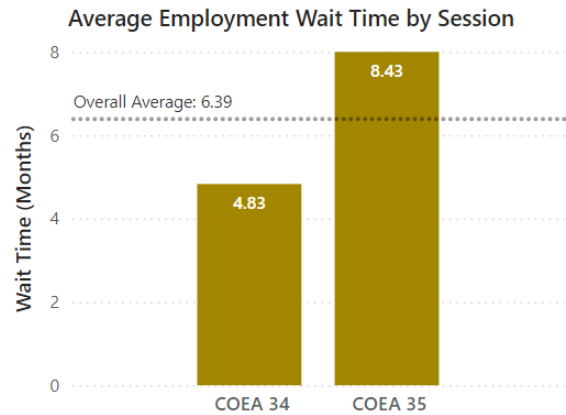
Corrections Officers Equivalency Academy

The Corrections Officers Equivalency Academy (COEA) is an 80-hour training program for corrections officers to meet the training requirements of RCW 43.101.220. These recruits are officers with previous corrections experience or training but are not certified by the state of Washington.

Two COEA classes were held in 2024, training 29 recruits at the WSCJTC headquarters in Burien.



On average, recruits were registered for COEA four months and 24 days before they started a class. This is nearly two months more than the average wait time in 2023.



On average, recruits waited six months and 12 days after being hired to start a COEA class, two months more than the average wait time in 2023.

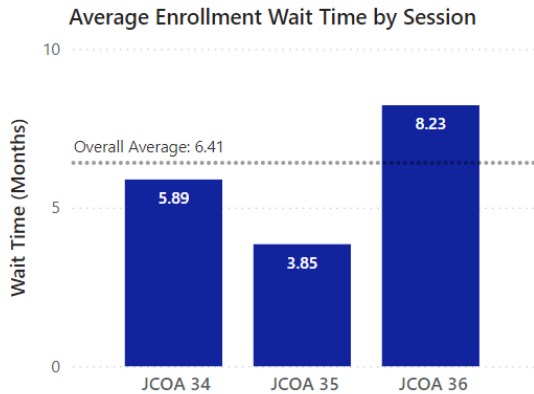
Synopsis

Due to the WSCJTC holding only two COEA classes per year, recruits can wait up to six months to attend a class. While recruits are, on average, registered nearly five months before starting a class, they are hired on average six months before their class. This indicates that agencies delay registering their recruits at least one month after hiring them. In 2024, agencies were able to get their recruit into the next scheduled COEA class. Neither class held in 2024 reached full capacity (30 recruits).

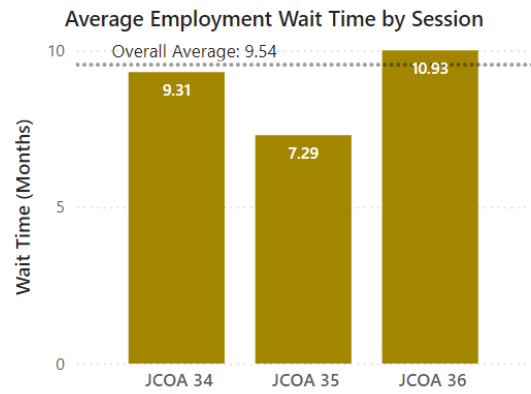
Juvenile Corrections Officers Academy

The Juvenile Corrections Officers Academy (JCOA) is an 80-hour training program for juvenile corrections/detention officers to meet the training requirements of RCW 43.101.220.

Three JCOA classes commenced in 2024, training 69 recruits. All these classes were held at the WSCJTC headquarters in Burien.



On average, recruits registered for JCOA six months and 12 days before they started a class. This is two months more than the average wait time in 2023.



On average, recruits waited nine months and 16 days after they were hired to start a JCOA class, which matches the wait time in 2023.

Synopsis

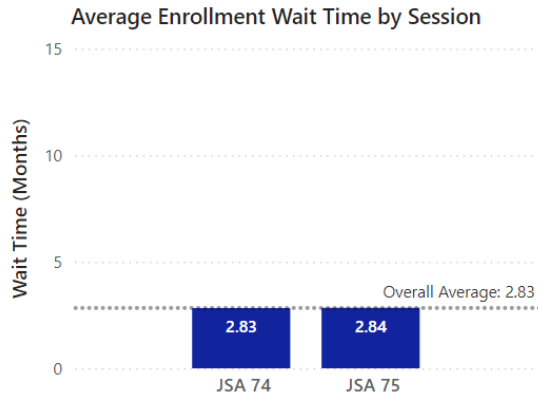
The data shows that while recruits are registered roughly six months before starting a class, they are hired on average nine months before their class. This indicates that agencies register their recruits around three months after hiring them. This delay impacts their ability to be admitted to the first available academy class and, therefore, can potentially increase their wait time.

Due to an increase in JCOA recruits in 2024, the WSCJTC held an additional JCOA class than in the previous year.

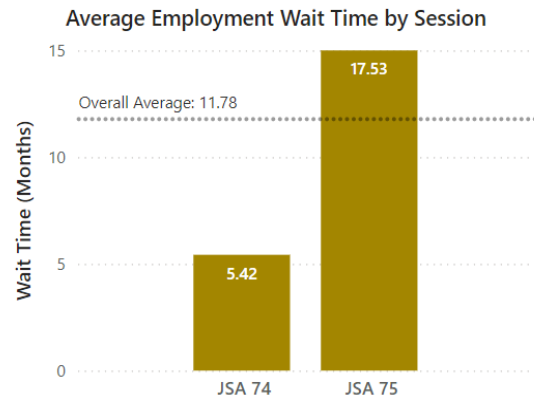
Juvenile Services Academy

The Juvenile Services Academy (JSA) is a 40-hour training program for juvenile probation officers and other related personnel to meet the training requirements of RCW 43.101.220.

Two JSA classes commenced in 2024, training 38 recruits at the WSCJTC headquarters in Burien.



On average, recruits registered for JSA two months and 25 days before starting a class, matching the wait time in 2023.



On average, recruits waited 11 months and 24 days after being hired to start a JSA class, which is two months less than the wait time in 2023.

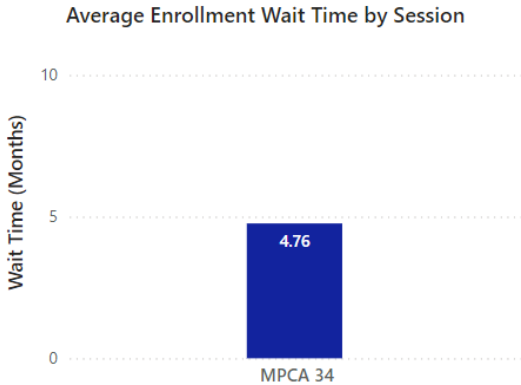
Synopsis

The data shows that while recruits are registered roughly three months before starting a class, they are hired on average nearly 12 months before class. This indicates that agencies register their recruits around eleven months after hiring them. This delay suggests that most agencies are not complying with the state mandate for JSA recruits to begin training within six months of hire.

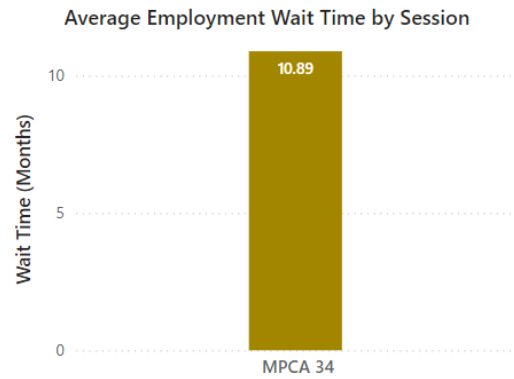
Misdemeanant Probation Counselors Academy

The Misdemeanant Probation Counselors Academy (MPCA) is an 80-hour training program for adult probation officers and counselors to meet the training requirements of RCW 43.101.220.

One MPCA class was held in 2024, training 37 recruits at the WSCJTC headquarters in Burien.



On average recruits were registered for MPCA 4.76 months before they started this class. This is one month longer than the wait time in 2023.



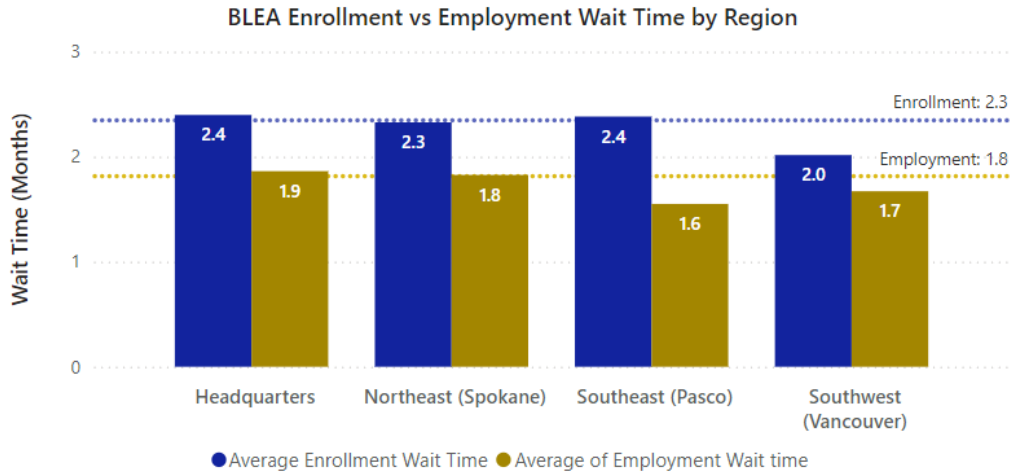
On average recruits waited 10.89 months after they were hired to start this MPCA class. This is two months less than the wait time in 2023.

Synopsis

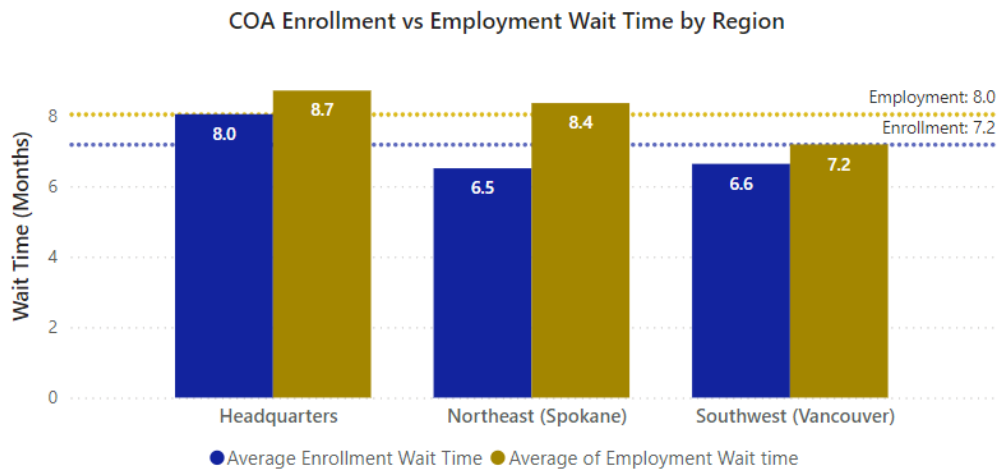
The WSCJTC is funded for only one MPCA class each year, making it unlikely for recruits to begin training within the state-mandated six months of hire. The slight increase in registration wait time indicates that agencies are registering their recruits one month earlier than they did in 2023. Regardless, the data shows that agencies are waiting on average, six months after hiring their recruits to register them for the upcoming class.

Regional Campus Wait Time Comparison

In 2024, 15 basic training classes were held at regional campuses. This includes three BLEA classes, one BLEEA class, and four COA classes held at the newly opened campus in the southwest region.



The chart above indicates that wait times for BLEA recruits to start a class are relatively consistent across the WSCJTC campuses.



The chart above indicates that COA recruits were enrolled in regional classes earlier than recruits who attended classes at the WSCJTC headquarters.

Summary

In 2024, the WSCJTC Basic Training Division expanded operations to the SW Regional Campus in Vancouver. This new regional academy, combined with the expansion to the SE regional campus in Pasco in 2023, has reduced enrollment wait times for recruits state-wide.

The average enrollment wait time for BLEA recruits state-wide is just over two months, which allows agencies to easily meet the training mandates of RCW 43.101.200. This wait time often results from an agency requesting that their recruit be placed in a class later than the first available class, due to either pre-academy training or pending employment processes.

The WSCJTC plans to open the NW Regional Campus in Arlington during the first quarter of 2025, which is expected to further reduce BLEA wait times.

In 2024, the WSCJTC obtained supplemental funding to offer additional COA academy classes at regional campuses, addressing long registration wait times. The BTD completed a total of six additional COA classes at the NE and the SW regional campuses, graduating 172 recruits and eliminating the COA wait list by the end of the year. As with BLEA students, holding COA classes at regional campuses has allowed agencies to send their recruits closer to home.

The delay of agencies to register their recruits was especially evident for corrections services academies (JCOA, JSA, and MPCA), with some agencies waiting as long as 12 months after hiring. This delay affects recruits' admission to the next academy class and may lead to non-compliance with legislative mandates.

The WSCJTC continues to encourage early registration submission to decrease overall wait times for all academies.

The Basic Training Division regularly analyzes registration data to reduce wait times for recruits in all basic training academy programs and ensure compliance with legislative mandates.